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THE CLASSICAL READING LEAGUE OF NEW YORK STATE

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One of the serious indictments brought by the opponents of the classics is that the teachers of Latin and Greek are not really masters of these languages, that they do not read them readily, and that, in fact, comparatively few read any classical literature beyond what is required for the class work. That there is a certain amount of truth in the charge may be admitted. It is very doubtful whether any large proportion of the Latin and Greek teachers in the country read annually any considerable selection from the ancient writers. Many of those who specially prepared to teach Latin or Greek doubtless keep up their reading, but when we consider the fact that a great proportion of classical teachers had no preparatory work beyond the courses required in high school and college, it would be safe to conjecture that their first-hand acquaintance with classical literature has not been greatly extended since they began teaching.

This situation constitutes one of the vulnerable points in the defense of the classics, and attention has frequently been called in classical gatherings and publications to the need of progressive scholarship, if Latin and Greek teachers are to teach with freshness and conviction. A constructive plan to encourage the regular reading every year of at least a few pages of Latin or Greek has been devised and put into operation during the past two years by the Classical Association of New York State (Classical Section of the N.Y. S.T.A.). Apparent success the first year and the numerous requests from teachers outside the state for information regarding the details seem to justify a description of the plan and its results.

The chief difficulty to be overcome was felt to be the isolation of many teachers of the classics from their fellow-workers in the

same field, and the consequent lack of that *esprit de corps* which holds a group at a given task until it is finished. Probably every teacher at one time or another during the year is inspired with the resolve to read a part, at least, of some Latin or Greek author. Many doubtless make a beginning, but under pressure of other exacting duties, and without the encouragement that comes from working with others, they do not carry out their plans. To meet this difficulty it was decided to organize a Reading League, with definite courses outlined, in the hope that teachers would be inspired to undertake and complete one or more courses by the realization that many others throughout the state were doing the same thing.

Accordingly a committee was appointed to draw up such a series of courses, each to be of very moderate length, with the minimum requirement so small that no teacher could possibly find the burden serious. This minimum requirement was a page a week. The ambitious teacher could register for as many of the twelve courses finally outlined as he chose.

The first committee (1916-17) consisted of Dr. George Dwight Kellogg, Union College; Miss Charlotte A. Calkins, Newark; Mr. Francis R. Parker, Elmira Free Academy; Mr. S. Dwight Arms, State Educational Department. Professor John Ira Bennett of Union was added to assist in the preparation of the Greek courses, and the president of the Association acted as the executive secretary.

The courses outlined the first year were as follows:

I. Greek Courses:

- A. Elementary Greek.
- B. Selections from *Iliad* or *Odyssey*:
 - a) *Iliad* XXII and XXIV;
 - or
 - b) *Odyssey*, I, VI, and IX.
- C. Plato: *The Apology of Socrates*.
- D. Demosthenes: *On the Chersonesus*, and *The Third Philippic*.

II. LATIN COURSES

- A. Prose (Caesar): (a) *Galic War*, Book VII; or (b) *Civil War*, Book I; or (c) *Civil War*, Book III.
- B. Prose (Cicero): (a) about thirty-three selected letters; or (b) *The Fourth Verrine*; or (c) *Pro Murena*.

- C. Poets (Vergil): (a) *Eclogues* and *The First Georgic*; or (b) *Georgics* II and IV; or (c) *Aeneid* VII-VIII.
- D. Poets (Ovid): (a) *Metamorphoses*, 1500 verses in selections; or (b) *Heroides*.
- E. Poets (Elegiac Poets in Selections): (a) *Tibullus*; or (b) *Propertius*.
- F. Prose Composition: Free composition of the type useful for oral dialogue in the classroom.
- G. Prose Composition: Written exercises based on Cicero and Nepos.

The next serious problem was the inevitable financial one. To print circulars, to conduct a persistent propaganda among the teachers, and to conduct the correspondence with those enrolled in the League required last year, and will require each year, over a hundred dollars. It was decided to kill two birds with one stone, if possible, and by securing financial assistance from the colleges at the same time interest them directly in the success of the League. The following letter was sent to the presidents of the colleges in New York state.

The Classical Association of New York State proposes to the colleges and universities of New York State the following plan for the encouragement of wider reading of the classical authors and consequently a more progressive scholarship among the 1,500 teachers of Latin and Greek in this state:

1. A committee of the Classical Association of New York State will draw up a reading course for each year, which shall meet the approval of the Latin or Greek Department of the institution which is to direct the course for that year.
2. The officers of the Classical Association of New York State will acquaint the teachers with the proposed course and conduct a vigorous and continuous campaign for the purpose of enrolling as many teachers of Latin and Greek as possible in a "League," the members of which will agree to carry out the year's program.
3. The Classical Association will pay for all clerical work involved in securing the enrolment.
4. Each of the five or more colleges and universities subscribing to the plan agrees to meet once in five years the expenses of printing and postage, provided these expenses do not exceed fifty dollars for that year and provided at least five institutions subscribe to the plan. They furthermore agree to contribute ten dollars each the first year, when the expenses involved in initiating the course will be much larger than thereafter.
5. Each college also agrees during the year it directs the course to require and examine quarterly reports and at the end of the year to certify to the officers of the Classical Association the names of those teachers who have completed the course. These names will be published in the *Journal* of the New York State Teachers' Association.

Six colleges replied favorably, and continuous support was thereby insured for the League for six years. Thus another important object was secured. It was our desire so to organize the League as to prevent its discontinuance until the plan had had a trial of some years. We did not expect striking results the first one or two years, and we wished to insure its continuance, no matter how discouraging the first returns might be. By our plan the life of the League is automatically secured for at least six years, since the colleges that have actually carried out their agreement will naturally insist that the others do the same.

The six colleges supporting the League are Union, Rochester, College of the City of New York, Hobart, Hamilton, and Syracuse. The courses were conducted the first year by Union College, with Dr. Kellogg in charge of the Latin courses and Professor Bennett in charge of the Greek courses.

The third problem was to secure the enrolment of the teachers in the League. We agreed that we should be well satisfied if one hundred enrolled the first year, but even that number we could not expect without an active campaign. A letter was sent to all the teachers of Latin and Greek in the state beginning as follows:

HOW MUCH LATIN DO YOU READ EACH YEAR?

We all feel that we do not read enough Latin and Greek. We all sporadically make resolutions and for a time carry them out. Would you not be much more likely to cover a definite amount if you were one of several hundred throughout the state who had all agreed to read the same thing at the same time?

Inclosed was a circular giving a complete description of the courses, information about texts, and general directions. A post-card for registration, with an abbreviated outline of courses printed thereon, was also inclosed.

In addition to this a letter was sent out by the state department to the principals of high schools and to the district superintendents. More effective than any other agency was the vigorous support of the state inspector in Latin and Greek, Mr. S. Dwight Arms, who at every meeting of classical teachers throughout the state, large and small, urged upon the teachers the desirability of joining the League.

The total enrolment for the year was 257, and the total number of courses elected was 484, distributed among the courses outlined above as follows: Latin A, 124; B, 102; C, 77; D, 51; E, 26; F, 26; G, 17; Greek A, 12; B, 24; C, 15; D, 10. I am indebted to Dr. Kellogg for these data.

The one discouraging feature of the year's operations was the failure of a large number of those who enrolled to make any report on the work done. This was due largely to the lack of specific information as to the time, manner, and place of reporting. This year this defect will be remedied, and each member will receive upon enrolment specific directions regarding reports.

It has not been found practicable to give any examination on the courses covered. A simple statement every quarter that the required amount has been read is all that is expected.

This year the University of Rochester will conduct the course. The committee in charge is as follows: Dean Charles Hoeing, Chairman, the University of Rochester; Mr. S. Dwight Arms, State Educational Department; Dr. Mason D. Gray, East High School, Rochester; Miss Myrta E. Hunn, Batavia High School; Dr. George Dwight Kellogg, Union University; Professor Ryland M. Kendrick, The University of Rochester.

The courses outlined for this year (1917-18) are as follows:

I. LATIN COURSES

- A. CAESAR: (a) *Gallic War*, Book VII; or (b) *Civil War*, Book III (Atherton, Ginn and Co., 45c.).
- B. CICERO: *De Senectute* and *De Amicitia* (Editions by Bennett, Benjamin H. Sanborn and Co., \$1.15; Kelsey, Allyn and Bacon, \$1.20. Separate editions of the *De Senectute* by Moore, American Book Co., 80c.; Rockwood, American Book Co., 75c. Separate edition of the *De Amicitia* by Price, American Book Co., 75c.).
- C. TACITUS: *Agricola* and *Germania* (Editions by Stuart, Macmillan, \$1.00; Allen, Ginn and Co., \$1.00; Gudeman, Allyn and Bacon, \$1.40; Hopkins, Benjamin H. Sanborn and Co., \$1.10).
- D. VERGIL: (a) *Eclogues* and *First Georgic*; or (b) *Georgics* II and IV; or (c) *Aeneid*, Books VII and VIII. (Editions of *Eclogues* and *Georgics* by Papillon and Haigh, Clarendon Press, 60c.; Page, Macmillan, \$1.25. Edition of *Aeneid*, VII-IX, by Papillon and Haigh, Clarendon Press, 50c.).

- E. HORACE: (a) *Odes*, Books I and II; or (b) *Odes*, Books III and IV. (Editions by Bennett, Allyn and Bacon, \$1.40; Moore, American Book Co., \$1.50; Shorey and Laing, Benjamin H. Sanborn and Co., \$1.40; Smith, Ginn and Co., \$1.50).
- F. JUVENAL: *Satires* I, III, IV, V, VII, X (Editions by Wright, Ginn and Co., \$1.25; Wilson, University Publishing Co., \$1.40; Hardy, Macmillan, \$1.25).
- G. PLAUTUS AND TERENCE: Plautus, *Captivi* (editions by Elmer, Allyn and Bacon, \$1.25; Morris, Ginn and Co., \$1.25); and Terence, *Phormio* (Editions by Elmer, Benjamin H. Sanborn and Co., \$1.10; Sloman, Clarendon Press, 50c.).
- H. PROSE COMPOSITION: The A sentences in Exercises I–XV of the Gildersleeve-Lodge *Latin Composition Book* (D. C. Heath and Co., 75c.).
- I. COLLATERAL READING: Carter, *The Religion of Numa* (Macmillan, \$1.00); Duff, *A Literary History of Rome* (F. Fisher Unwin, \$3.50); Fowler, *Social Life at Rome* (Macmillan, \$2.25).

II. GREEK COURSES

- A. ELEMENTARY GREEK: Ball, *The Elements of Greek* (Macmillan, \$1.00), and Robertson, *An Introduction to Greek Reading* (Putnam, 65c.).
- B. CEBES: *Tablet* (Edition by Parsons, Ginn and Co., 75c.).
- C. XENOPHON: *Memorabilia*, Books I; II, 1, 21–24; IV, 3 (Edition by Smith, Ginn and Co., \$1.40).
- D. PLATO: *Phaedo* (Edition by Burnet, Clarendon Press, \$1.25).
- E. HOMER: (a) *Iliad*, Books XVI, XVII, XIX (Edition of Books XIII–XXIV by Monro and Allen, Clarendon Press, 75c.), or (b) *Odyssey*, Books V, VI, XI, XII (Edition of Books I–XII by Allen, Clarendon Press, 75c.).
- F. LYRIC POETS: Tyler, *Selections from Greek Lyric Poets* (Ginn and Co., \$1.00).
- G. COLLATERAL READING: Gilbert Murray, *Rise of the Greek Epic* (Clarendon Press, \$2.50). Haigh, *The Attic Theatre* (Clarendon Press, \$3.70). Mahaffy, *What Have the Greeks Done for Modern Civilization?* (Putnam, \$2.50.)

This description has been given with considerable detail in order to furnish other states with material with which to develop similar courses. Meantime, our association will be glad to have any teacher in the country register with us for this coming year. The only obligations assumed are to read each course selected at the rate of not less than eight (8) lines a day and to make quarterly reports. Registration may be sent to Mason D. Gray, East High School, Rochester, New York. Reports of work covered and

questions regarding the courses are to be addressed to Dean Charles Hoeing, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York.

The regulation registration postcard is reprinted below. It may be cut out and mailed or the course or courses desired may be recorded on a plain card.

**ENROLMENT CARD
IN THE
READING LEAGUE 1917-18**

I desire to enroll in the League and agree to cover the courses checked (+) at the rate indicated, before June 1, 1918.

CHECK HERE	LATIN COURSE	DESCRIPTION	AVERAGE RATE
	A	Cæsar	Eight lines a day
	B	Cicero	" "
	C	Tacitus	" "
	D	Vergil	" "
	E	Horace	" "
	F	Juvenal	" "
	G	Plautus & Terence	" "
	H	Prose Composition	" "
	I	Collateral Reading	

CHECK HERE	GREEK COURSE	DESCRIPTION	AVERAGE RATE
	A	Elementary Greek	Eight lines a day
	B	Cebes	" "
	C	Xenophon	" "
	D	Plato	" "
	E	Homer	" "
	F	Lyric Poets	" "
	G	Collateral Reading	

Name

Address

Quarterly Reports to be checked here by the college authorities when received.

NOVEMBER 1	FEBRUARY 1	APRIL 1	JUNE 1